VERWOOD BOWLING CLUB

CONSTITUTION as at 30th OCTOBER 2024

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A TRUSTEES

Trustees of the Land

The Club holds a 99-year Lease dated 21st February 1985 at a peppercorn rent. A copy of the Leasehold Agreement is displayed in the Clubhouse.

- Use of the land is for the purpose of a private Bowling Club only and various social activities.
- Only to be open to bona fide Members, guests and potential new bowlers from all denominations of the Community.
- No alcohol may be sold on the premises. Alcoholic beverages taken onto Club premises are for the consumption of Members, their guests and visiting bowling teams.

Trustees of the Club

The Club's obligations to observe the provisions and stipulations of the Lease are vested in the Club's Trustees. They are those persons who have been elected to hold office in the following positions - President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Their names are displayed in the Clubhouse. Not less than two or more than four Trustees are appointed to act until their death, resignation, or removal from office by Members in Meeting.

The Trustees shall be and are indemnified against risk and expense from the Club's resources. The Committee, on appropriate occasions, invites the attendance of the Trustees to discuss current plans and progress of the Club. Any vacancy occurring in the Trustees is filled by recommendation of the Committee, endorsed by Members at a General Meeting, and then the Deed of Appointment is executed by the President on behalf of the Club.

B AIMS

The name of the Club shall be Verwood Bowling Club (hereafter VBC).
The Club aims to continually improve its facilities for serving the bowling fraternity of Verwood and the surrounding area and visiting bowlers. It seeks to raise the bowling standards of its Members, to encourage good fellowship and sportsmanship and to promote the social and fund-raising activities which contribute to the aims and well-being of the Club.

The Club will affiliate to appropriate bodies and organisations to enhance the expertise of the Members.
The Club is a non-profit making organisation. All income is to be used solely to meet the costs of operating and running the Club and no distribution shall be made to any Member other than expenses incurred on behalf of VBC.

C MEMBERSHIP

VBC maintains its green and facilities due to the dedication and work of its Members. Persons wishing to join the Club are asked to complete an application form which is obtainable from the Secretary. Depending upon the date of application VBC does offer a reduced annual subscription.
Membership is open to all in the Community and without discrimination on the grounds of Ethnicity, Nationality, Sexual Orientation, Religious Beliefs, Sex, Age or Disability.
Membership is a privilege and any abuse to other Members or wilful damage to Club property will be punished appropriately. In this event the Committee's decision is binding and final.
C1. Annual Registration will take place in February of each year. The annual rate of Subscription Fees for Playing Members and Social Members is decided by the Committee at their January Committee Meeting. In order to ensure continued Membership Fees should be paid to VBC via the Treasurer no later than the 28th February. This will ensure that Members can resume bowling as soon as the green re-opens.
C2. A Member is not eligible to take part in any match or competition until his/her subscription is paid in full. Members are not eligible to use the facilities of the Club until their subscription is paid.
C3. The Committee shall, at their discretion, be empowered to reimburse all or a proportion of the annual subscription in cases of hardship or for other acceptable reasons. Applications for reimbursement shall be made in writing to the Secretary before 1st April in each year for which such concession is sought.
C4. Playing Members who have paid their subscriptions are entitled to full use of the Club's facilities.
C5. Junior Members are those persons below the age of seventeen who pay a reduced fee but have the same entitlement as adult Members.
C6. Social Members, who have paid their subscriptions, are entitled to use the Club's facilities but have no access to the Green, except when performing the duties of match umpires or markers.
C7. Honorary Life Members, as recommended by the Committee in appreciation of their previous services to the Club, will be granted full access to those services enjoyed by Members without payment of subscriptions.

D MANAGEMENT

Management of the Club is by a Committee of 14 members holding the following Offices:

D1.1 The President is the principal representative of the Club, Chairman of the Management Committee and General Meetings. The President shall be an Authorised Bank Account Signatory.
D1.2 The Vice President acts when the President is unavailable, and is normally but not necessarily expected to be the next President. It would be beneficial if the Vice President was nominated from a Member of the Management Committee but is not essential.

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D1.3 The Secretary conducts the everyday business of the Club, and where appropriate may delegate the work required to other Committee Members.

The Secretary's duties are:

To respond to any correspondence and produce Agendas for all meetings.

To notify the Committee of their forthcoming Meetings, record the matters discussed and note any actions required.

To notify Members at least 2 weeks in advance of any forthcoming General Meeting. The Secretary will convene a Special General Meeting of the Club, giving at least three weeks' notice of the Meeting:

a) When required by the Committee.
b) When ten or more Members offer a signed request.

The Notice of the Meeting will set out the matters to be discussed and, if Members are required to take a decision, the Notice will state the Motion to be put before the Meeting, together with the names of those who Propose and Second the Motion.

If the meeting is called at the request of Members, the Members concerned will provide the Secretary with the required information to inform the Meeting of the subject(s) to be discussed and, if necessary, the Form of Motion on which a vote may be taken. A simple majority is required for the Motion to pass.

The Secretary shall maintain all such records as may be required by the various Associations to which the Club is affiliated.

The Secretary shall be an Authorised Bank Account Signatory.

D1.4 The Treasurer is responsible to the Committee for receiving all monies due to the Club and paying Creditors. The Treasurer holds the Club's cash and is one of the Signatories authorised by the Committee for the use of Bank Accounts. The Treasurer keeps such records as are required to enable a report on the Club's financial position be made to any Meeting of the Committee, and prepares and arranges for the Audit of the Annual Statement of Accounts for the relevant Financial Year for presentation to Members at the Annual General Meeting.

The Treasurer reimburses individuals or Sub-Committees for any approved expenditure on the Club's behalf, against receipted bills, or other suitable records of expenditure required for the annual audit. The Treasurer is empowered to agree with Sub-Committees or individuals, as to the manner in which monies collected on behalf of the Club shall be paid into Petty Cash or the Club' s Bank Accounts.

The Ladies Section will be funded from Club resources and will be accountable to the Committee for all financial transactions related to that Section.

D1.5 The Fixtures Secretary is responsible to the Committee for arranging a Programme of Friendly Matches to be played during the season and for the weekly playing Schedule open to Club Members.

D1.6 The Competition Secretary is responsible to the Committee for organising and processing all internal Club Competitions.

D1.7 The Membership Secretary is responsible to the Committee for maintaining database records of all Club Members, co-ordinating the Membership renewal process and deals with all incoming Membership enquiries.

D1.8/9 The Men's Captain and the Vice-Captain who deputises in the absence of the Captain, are responsible to the Committee for all matters appertaining to the play and conduct of all men's League Matches.

D1.10 The Ladies Captain is responsible to the Committee for all matters appertaining to the play and conduct of the Ladies (if any) and Mixed League Matches. The Ladies Section shall be entitled to elect their own Officers and to organise their bowling activities as the Ladies Section of the Club.

D.1.11 The Ladies Section Secretary is responsible for the general organisation of the Ladies Section.

D1.12 The Green Ranger is responsible to the Committee for all aspects of the Bowling Green maintenance and supervises volunteer Members in the maintenance of the Bowling Green and surrounding areas.

D.1.13 The Publicity Officer is responsible for general Club publicity, preparation of leaflets and handouts and production of a monthly Newsletter for Club Members.

D.1.14 The Social Secretary is responsible to the Committee for planning a Social Programme of various events.

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D2. The Committee Members are elected at the Annual General Meeting and retire at the next Annual General Meeting. All retiring Officers and other Committee Members are eligible for re-election to the Committee.
D3. Playing Members are entitled to attend and vote at all General Meetings of the Club. They are eligible for nomination and election to the Committee. They may nominate other Members for election to the Committee, and may participate in all activities of the Club.
D4. Social and Junior Members have no voting powers in General Meetings and are not eligible for election to the Committee.
D5. Social Members can be offered Committee Membership at the discretion of the Management Committee. This will only apply to those who have been previously Full Playing Members, and who now wish to assist the Club as a Member on the Management Committee.
D6. Lady Members are entitled to elect their own Officers and to organise their bowling activities as the Ladies Section of the Club and to affiliate to appropriate bodies.
D7. Comments from Members should be made in writing to the Secretary for reference to the Committee which will take any appropriate action. If a complaint is concerned with the conduct of a Member, no action will be taken without first giving that Member an opportunity to meet the Committee. The Committee's decision is final and binding when resolving the complaint.
D8. Ten or more Members may request the Secretary in writing to call a Special General Meeting of the Club.

E COMMITTEE DUTIES AND POWERS

E1. Five Members of the Committee will constitute a quorum and decisions will be taken by simple majority unless otherwise required by Club Rules. The President is not entitled to vote except to make a casting vote in in the event of an equality of votes on any matter, but may also vote If holding a specific job within the Committee.
E2. The President, or in their absence the Vice-President, will preside at all Committee Meetings. In the absence of both the President and Vice-President the Committee Members present shall appoint a Chairman for that Meeting only. Proxy votes are permitted in the event that a Committee Member is unable to attend a Committee Meeting.
E3. The Committee may fill any vacancy occurring in its Membership in the course of the year.
E4. The Committee may elect various Sub-Committees to deal with certain aspects of the affairs of the Club. These Sub-Committees may include co-opted Members serving together with Committee Members.
E5. The Committee as advised by the Green Ranger will decide the opening date of the bowling season and the finishing date.
E6. The Committee welcomes constructive ideas or suggestions from Members in relation to Club activities.
E7. The Committee will decide:

- Match and Competition Fees to be paid by Members and visiting guest bowlers, and a statement of this decision will be posted on the Club Notice Board.
- The reduced amount of Subscription payable by a new Member joining late in the bowling season.
- Any action to be taken following consideration of suggestions and complaints.

E8. At each meeting the Committee will receive a statement by the Treasurer of the Club's financial position, and will decide the details of any proposed investments and any expenditure needed in the interests of the Club.
E9. The Committee may recommend, for the consideration of Members in Annual General Meeting:

E9.1 The conferment of Honorary Life Membership.

E9.2 Nominations for appointment, to fill vacancies with respect to Trustees, Auditor or other Offices of a special category.

E10 The Committee will be the arbiter of any question of interpretation of any Procedure, unless and if an Annual General Meeting decides otherwise.
E11 The Management Committee will appoint an Emergency & Disciplinary Committee to hold an enquiry into any case of misconduct or alleged misconduct or breach of the Constitution or any Regulation by a Member or Official of the Club. Any enquiry will be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of Bowls England Regulations. Any decision of the Committee shall be final and binding.

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F MEETINGS

There are basically four types of Meetings - Committee, Emergency, Special General and Annual General.
Committee. This Meeting is held by Members of the Committee every month, when the day to day operation of the club is organised.
Emergency. The President will call for a Meeting, when Members need to be informed of some occurrence, for which a joint decision of the Membership is required.
Special. Members can ask in writing for a Special Meeting when the request is supported by ten or more Members.
In any of the above Meetings decisions will be passed by a simple majority of the Members present.
Annual General Meeting. This is held in the closed season at a date fixed by the Committee:
To report on the past year's activities.
To approve the Annual Financial Accounts.
To vote in Committee Members to function in the coming year. A simple majority is required.
The procedure for the AGM is as follows:

Nominations of persons for election to the Committee are invited by posting a Nomination List in the Clubhouse, not later than six weeks prior to the AGM. Nominations will close on the 15th October. A Member may only have three Nominations as either Proposer or Seconder.

The Agenda for the Annual General meeting will be circulated to all Members by the Secretary and makes provision for:
F1. The current President to offer a report on the past year.
F2 The duly elected President will take the Chair and proceed with the business of the Meeting as per the Agenda.
F2.1. The Treasurer to present the previous year's Audited Financial Accounts, which will then require a motion to approve the Accounts. A Proposer and Seconder is required with a simple majority needed for the motion to pass.
F2.2 To elect the Officers and Committee Members for the forthcoming year.
F2.3 To propose the appointment of persons to fill vacancies as Auditor, Trustee, or other special categories of office.
F2.4 To propose any changes to the Operating Procedures of the Club.
F2.5 To consider any Motion presented to the Secretary in writing. Any submissions should be made at least two weeks prior to the Meeting.

G. CLUB INSIGNIA

The Club colours are blue and gold. Badges and Ties, Flags or other insignia are acceptable only if they are of designs approved by the Committee.

H. LOSS OR DAMAGE

VBC accepts NO RESPONSIBILITY for loss of, or damage to vehicles or their contents parked near Club premises or for any articles or personal possessions left on the Club premises.

I PROCEDURES

Operating Procedures are decided by the Committee with the joint objectives of ensuring that Members shall have the fullest opportunities to enjoy their bowling, whilst at the same time protecting, maintaining and improving the Green and the other amenities of the Club.
Any Procedure issued by the Committee is final and binding and can only be rescinded by the Committee.
Members are required to accept the Procedure with good grace and accept guidance from the Officers or Committee members when they are not observed.

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J DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of the Club, which would require a simple majority assent of Members present voting in a General Meeting, the Committee, after consulting the Trustees, will decide on the steps to be taken to wind up the Club. After discharging all debts and liabilities, the remaining assets if any will be transferred to any bona fide sporting organisation or charity.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

OP1 PROTECTION AND CARE OF THE GREEN

OP1.1 The Green Ranger or Club Captain will decide when play may take place after heavy rain or may decide to close any or all rinks if in their opinion such action is justified for any reason.

OP1.2 The Green Ranger has the power to arrange the rinks as deemed desirable in the interests of maintaining the green as a whole.

OP1.3 Players, Umpires and Members must wear smooth-soled heel-less footwear on the green.

OP1.4 Players must do their utmost to avoid "bumping" of woods on the Green as this can be a source of much damage.

OP1.5 No person shall sit on the banks of the green in such a manner as to cause damage to the edges.

OP1.6 Running and smoking are not allowed on the green and no person shall drop matches, cigar, cigarette or pipe ash on the green.

OP1.7 Dogs are not allowed on the Club premises unless they are kept under control and away from the green.

OP1.8. Children are allowed on the Club premises only if accompanied by adults who will ensure that they are kept under control and well clear of the green.

OP1.9 Persons not engaged in the game shall stand or sit well clear of the green verges, and neither by word or act shall disturb the players.

OP1.10 Members are expected to be conversant with the Laws of the Game as stated by the World Bowls Board (subject to Bowls England Rulings).

OP1.11 Members are requested to wear tidy and suitable dress which should be interpreted as: -

OP1.11.1 Men's dress code – grey or white tailored trousers and Club Uniform or white shirt for Friendly and League Matches.

OP1.11.2 Ladies' dress code - grey/white Regulation Style skirt, tailored or cropped trousers and Club Uniform or white shirt for friendly and League Matches.

OP1.11.3 Alternative dress codes may be introduced, which have been approved by, and registered with, the appropriate Association and approved by the Management Committee.

OP1.11.3 Dress codes for various types of Matches or Competitions will be as stipulated on the Club paperwork and relevant Notice on the Club Notice Board.

OP1.11.4 Casual dress is permitted for Club Roll-Ups and social games.

OP1.12 So far as games in play will permit, Members playing are expected to give other Members, who desire to play, the opportunity of joining their game. When all rinks are in use it is desirable to arrange play so that full rinks are in use rather than partly filled rinks.

OP1.13. Visitors, Members' Guests and other non-playing Members may be invited to use the Green on payment of the fee as decided by the Committee from time to time. Dress should be smart casual wear with flat smooth-soled shoes.

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OP2 CLUB COMPETITION RULES

OP2.1 All games shall be played in accordance with the latest issue of "Laws of the Game" adopted by the World Bowls Board (subject to Bowls England Rulings), in conjunction with those set out in these Rules of the various Competitions, and on the rinks allocated as appropriate.
OP2.2 Only paid-up Members of VBC may enter.
OP2.3 All entry fees fixed by the Management Committee must be paid before play.
OP2.4 The first named player of the schedule will be the Challenger, who will be responsible for (a) obtaining a Marker for Singles, and (b) determining a convenient date for playing the match by mutual agreement.
OP2.5 All games must be completed by the given date for each round. Should any difficulty arise concerning completion date of any match, the Competition Secretary must be notified, whose decision shall be final.
OP2.6 For matches other than singles, the players taking part in the first game shall constitute the original Team. In any succeeding round, one player may be substituted and the substitute must not have played for any other Team in that Competition. All substitutes must have the approval of the Competition Secretary. A substitute may not play in the Skip position. The player who plays in the Final shall be entitled to any award.
OP2.7 Failure to comply with any of the above Rules may result in forfeiture of the match.

OP3 EXTERNAL COMPETITIONS

Members participating in external Competitions must acquaint themselves with the Rules governing each Competition they enter and recognise any constraints that may apply.

OP4 GUIDANCE FOR MATCH MARKERS

A notice is displayed in the Clubhouse entitled "Guidance for Markers in Club Competitions" and Members should acquaint themselves with this document. The duties of Markers are defined in Law 72 "Laws of the Game" issued by the World Bowls Board (subject to Bowls England Rulings).

OP5 CHILD and VULNERABLE ADULTS' PROTECTION POLICY

VBC fully accepts its legal and moral obligation to exercise its duty of care and to protect all children and vulnerable adults participating in its activities, and to safeguard their welfare.

VBC is committed to do this by acknowledging that:
- The welfare of the individual is paramount.
- All individuals, irrespective of age, gender, religion, race or disability, have the right to protection from abuse.
- All individuals have the right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity.

VBC shall use its best endeavours to ensure that:
- All allegations of abuse are taken seriously.
- The response to them will be appropriate to the nature of the complaint;
- The effectiveness of our policy is reviewed annually.
- The responsible person shall be the Safeguarding Officer (as per Section OP6 below) whose details will be displayed on the general Notice Board, to enable Members to address any concerns they might have to the Committee, through this Officer.

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OP6 APPOINTMENT OF SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Bowls England have decreed that the Club must appoint a Safeguarding Officer for the purpose of undertaking these core tasks:
Assist the Club in adopting and promoting the National Governing Body (NGB) policies and procedure.
Assist the Club to identify areas for development ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for all participants.
Act as the first point of contact to Members, Volunteers, Parents and Children in any issue concerning the safeguarding of participants, poor practice and potential or alleged abuse within or outside the sport.
Ensure that all incidents and concerns are dealt with in accordance with the NGB Guidelines.
Ensure that the appropriate procedures for safe recruitment of Volunteers are in place at the Club.
Maintain contact details for the Bowls England Safeguarding Lead, Child Social Care (previously Social Services), Adult Social Care (ASC) and the Police. Display these alongside the Officer's contact details at the Club.
Ensure that codes of conduct are in place, understood and communicated to all Members.
Advise the Bowls England Safeguarding Lead on safeguarding issues.
Maintain confidentiality but do not compromise secrecy. Safeguarding concerns involving adults at risk should also be reported to the Bowls England Safeguarding Lead on a "no name basis".

OP7. INSURANCE

Full public liability is not covered. However, our policy adequately provides cover for Members and invitees using the premises for the purpose of attending all Club events.

OP8 FIRST AID

A First Aid Kit and Accident Book are located in the Clubhouse and all accidents must be recorded therein. There is a defibrillator on the wall inside the Clubhouse.

OP9 RINK PLAY

There is a "Green" Diary which shows which rinks are needed for League, Friendly and internal Competition Matches. Those wishing to book a rink for a Club or Outside Competition game need to book a rink in this diary. This diary will also show if it is planned for the Green to be closed for maintenance or treatment.
Those coming for informal play must note in the "Diary of Play" which rink they played on and the date.
If the weather has been exceptionally wet, then the Green must be protected by using the protective nets.
The last person leaving the Club premises must secure the Clubhouse, the Equipment Store and the gate and return the key to the appropriate location.

OP9 MEMBER PARTICIPATION

In order to keep Playing and Social fees to a minimum, Members are expected to help maintain the Green, the grounds and the cleanliness of the Clubhouse and to also help and support social and fundraising events.

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